Revival of Agros

3. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some States and Union Territories propose to revive an organisation called 'Agros' found useful to farmers in helping them to procure agricultural inputs, like fertilizers and pesticides at normal prices;

(b) if so, the names of such States and Union Territories;

(c) whether Government are aware that an organisation like 'Agros' has set-up outlets in the rural areas almost on par with private dealers providing employment to hundreds of educated unemployed;

(d) whether Government propose to ask Government of Andhra Pradesh to take steps to set-up such an organisation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) There is no proposal received by the Central Government from any State or Union Territory for reviving of 'AGROS'.

(c) Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has not received any information about setting up of outlets by 'AGROS' on par with private dealers.

(d) and (e) There is no proposal under consideration of the Central Government asking Government of Andhra Pradesh to set up 'AGROS'. This is because the Andhra Pradesh State Agro Industries Development Corporation Limited is already in existence since 5.3.1968.

Indiscriminate use of Urea

4. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the indiscriminate use of urea to the near total exclusion of phosphatic and potassic fertilisers has seriously affected the soil; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in regard there to and the remedial steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) There is no adverse effect of urea application on soil. However, to avoid indiscriminate use of urea, Government of India is already implementing the scheme on 'Concessional Sale of Phosphatic and Potassic Fertilisers' and promoting the concept of balanced and integrated nutrient management through the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Balanced and Integrated Use of Fertilisers'.

Price Fixation of Copra in Kerala

5. SHRI JOY NADUKKARA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the floor price of 'Copra' is fixed at Rs. 2900 per quintal;

(b) the demand of the State Government of Kerala regarding the floor price;

(c) whether Government are aware that at present the producers are getting more than Rs. 4400 per quintal for Copra; and

(d) if so, the reasons for fixing the floor price at a lower rate?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The Union Government has announced the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for 'Ball' copra at Rs. 2925 per quintal and for 'Milling Copra' at Rs. 2700 per qunital for the 1997 season.

(b) The Government of Kerala had suggested the MSP of Rs. 3800/- per quintal for the 'Milling' Copra.

(c) As per the latest available information the wholesale price of 'Mill Pass' variety of copra at Cochin is Rs. 4215 per quintal and that for 'Dill Pass' variety at Kozhikode, Rs. 4700.

(d) The main objective of the Government price policy is to ensure remunerative price to the growers and to encourage them to adopt improved technology for higher levels of production with the assurance that in the event of glut in the market, the prices would not be allowed to fall below MSP and Government will procure all the quantity offered at MSP.

Improvement in productivity in the Eastern and North-Eastern regions

6. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the productivity in the Eastern and the North-Eastern region of the country is low as compared to other regions;

(b) if so, the comparative figures in this regard;

(c) whether Government propose to introduce Technical Missions to improve the productivity in these regions; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) A comparative statement giving productivity of foodgrains, oilseeds, sugarcane and jute/ mesta in Eastern, North-Eastern and other States during 1995-96 is annexed. (*see* below) There is a mixed picture in the productivity of various crops.

(c) and (d) There is no such proposal to introduce technological mission exclusively for these regions. However, the government is implementing various crop specific and sector specific developmental programmes in different States including Eastern and North-Eastern regions of the country for improving the productivity in agriculture sector.

Statement

Comparative statement giving productivity of Foodgrains, Oilseeds, Sugarcane and Jute/ Mesta in Eastern, North-Eastern and other States 1995-96

(Kg./Hec.)

States	Food-grains	Oil-seeds	Sugar-cane	Jute/ Mesta
Eastern State				
1. Bihar	1465	625	45513	1611
2. Orissa	1088	522	65303	1305
3. West Bengal	1985	780	76267	1969
4. Sikkim	1351	792	*	*
North-Eastern States				
1. Arunachal Pradesh	1201	1060	*	*
2. Assam	1306	515	41513	1666
3. Manipur	2511	459	*	*
4. Meghalaya	1163	644	*	1025
5. Mizoram	1589	909	*	*
6. Nagaland	1235	886	53189	*
7. Tripura	1951	720	*	1535
Others				
1. Andhra Pradesh	1719	918	71271	1445
2. Gujarat	1094	741	65045	*
3. Haryana	2537	1282	56181	*
4. Himachal Pradesh	1615	*	*	*
5. Jammu & Kashmir	1541	424	*	*
6. Karnataka	1292	685	79559	284
7. Kerala	1902	601	80000	*
8. Madhya Pradesh	1020	870	39980	430
9. Maharashtra	879	775	80442	261
10. Punjab	3472	1201	*	*
11. Rajasthan	805	799	50356	*
12. Tamil Nadu	2148	1472	11011	*
13. Uttar Pradesh	1886	855	60692	*
ALL INDIA	1499	851	68369	1733

* Crop not grown.

Central fund for flood relief to Tamil Nadu

7. SHRI R. MARGABANDU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have released the entire fund demanded by the Tamil Nadu Government towards flood relief;

(b) if not, whether it will not amount to discrimination between the States;

(c) the details of the demands made by the States and funds provided, State-wise; and

(d) whether entire funds have been fully utilised by the Tamil Nadu Government?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) Government of India have already released its entire share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for 1996-97 amounting to Rs. 44.51 crores to Government of Tamil Nadu. A Memoradum has been received seeking additional assistance of Rs. 621.55 crores from the National Fund for Calamity relief (NFCR) for relief and rehabilitation measures in the wake of heavy rains and floods of December, 1996. A Central Team visited the State on 27—31 December, 1996. Based on the report of the Team, the National Calamity relief Committee will decide about the quantum of additional assistace, if any, from the NFCR.